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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

2 March 1976

NOTE FOR MR. ELLSWORTH

SUBJECT: NRP Charter

Attached for your signature is a memo transmitting a revised National Reconnaissance Program Charter to the other members of the Committee on Foreign Intelligence. It incorporates the comments you and Mr. Latimer discussed.

[Redacted]
J. W. Plummer

1 Attachment
Memo for CFI members
w/atc

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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: Charter for the National Reconnaissance Program

Attached is a proposed updated charter for the National Reconnaissance Program, amended to be consistent with the requirements of Executive Order 11905, 18 February 1976. This document retains the features of streamlined management which I feel are essential to the successful conduct of the National Reconnaissance Program.

1 Attachment
Proposed Charter

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CHARTER
NATIONAL RECONNAISSANCE PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

There is hereby created a National Reconnaissance Program (NRP) for the collection of foreign intelligence by satellites or other overhead means. The Program will be managed by the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), a special office within the Department of Defense for the collection of specialized intelligence through reconnaissance programs. This charter sets forth the responsibilities of the NRO, which will be conducted in accordance with the legal requirements of Executive Order 11905, "United States Foreign Intelligence Activities," 18 February 1976, and its implementing directives. As a function of national importance, the NRP is assigned the highest priority for DoD and industrial support.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee on Foreign Intelligence (CFI) shall exercise such authority over the NRP as is specified by Executive Order 11905.

The Secretary of Defense shall appoint a senior Department of Defense statutory official to be the Director of the NRO (DNRO), with the concurrence of the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI). The Secretary of Defense shall provide the necessary support to execute the Program.

The DNRO shall establish a staff to support himself and the CFI.

The DNRO shall direct and manage the NRP. Planning and programming for satellite systems approved by the CFI are the sole responsibility of the DNRO. He is responsible for research, development, procurement, operation, and control of satellite or other overhead collectors of foreign intelligence, and has the authority to assign responsibilities to the various departments and agencies of the Government, according to their capabilities. The NRO will not produce finished intelligence.

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The responsibility of the DNRO is to satisfy, through conduct of the NRP, foreign intelligence collection requirements established by the CFI. The DNRO shall submit each request to conduct a foreign intelligence collection mission to the Intelligence Operations Board for approval.

The DNRO shall provide staff support to the CFI for all matters pertaining to the NRP. The Intelligence Community Staff (ICS) will be furnished system level performance and cost data required to perform value assessments as directed by the CFI.

No other department or agency shall engage in reconnaissance intelligence collection using satellites or conduct studies or advanced technologies related thereto.

The DNRO shall establish direct lines of control and communications to all elements of the NRO and supporting organizations for development, operations and logistics activities. The NRO shall not be subject to DoD or CIA instructions or directives except as their application may be beneficial to the management of the NRP, as determined by the DNRO. The DoD Inspector General and General Counsel will be responsible for oversight of the NRO, in compliance with Section 6 of the Executive Order. Contract audit functions will be performed by the Defense Contract Audit Agency, in accordance with covert security procedures.

The DNRO shall prepare the budget for the NRP and submit it to the CFI for approval and inclusion in the overall intelligence budget. The DNRO shall defend the NRP through briefings to the Congress or elsewhere in support of the CFI.

The DNRO shall have reprogramming authority within the approved NRP, subject to rules governing the reprogramming of funds adopted by the CFI.

The DNRO is designated as the Head of a Procuring Agency, and may redelegate to the extent of his legal authority. He shall also have the authority to approve the lease or procurement of automated data processing equipment integral to NRP systems.

The DNRO shall establish the manning requirements for the NRO and request manpower support from the appropriate agencies and departments.

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The NRP shall be considered a covert activity of the U.S. Government and will not, as a matter of policy, be publicly acknowledged without the approval of the DCI. The DNRO is responsible for recommending to the DCI the security measures necessary for the protection of the NRP and for implementation of security procedures.

Director of Central
Intelligence

Deputy Secretary of
Defense

Deputy Assistant
for National
Security Affairs

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